

New Budget Approved At \$6.55 Million

Town Meeting voters unanimously approved a new operating budget of \$6,558,199 last Saturday.

This year's budget is up \$212,153 or 3.3 per cent from last year. The tax rate for this year is \$49.60 per \$1,000 valuation, Hurley said. The projection for the fiscal 1980 tax rate is still unclear, but may represent no increase if property assessments and state aid goes up.

The large items within the budget include: a total school budget of \$3,531,516 which is up \$69,228 or 1.9 per cent from last year; total protection of persons and property budget of \$1,055,598, which includes Police and Fire Depart-

ments and many other services.

The big money article passed with little discussion after its introduction by Patrick Hurley, Chairman of the Advisory Board. Hurley outlined the months of work his committee had spent in coming up with budget totals.

"The election of the Governor added a side-light," he commented.

"How do we operate in bringing together all budget requests with the tax cap? We are in a state of flux."

"The impact of the cost of petroleum based products — oil, gasoline, heat, light — each of us has to deal with," he said.

School Committee Will Have Six Members

An article proposing reduction of the School Committee was six to five members was defeated by voters at the annual town meeting Monday night.

Proponent Richard Sylvia, a former board member, said reduction would improve the general operation of the committee, rendering it more efficient, decisive and responsive to the community. His main premise for the reduction was that the large number of tie votes the committee had with in the last three years lost time and delayed issues.

Ann Baird said the six-member committee hasn't been a problem to Cohasset, and that it particularly helped with a large workload.

Committee Member Patricia Walsh also opposed the article, even though her name appeared in the warrant as a proponent of the citizens petition. "I must have been blind," Mrs. Walsh said when she signed the petition. "I thought it was going to the Bylaw Study Committee

only." Mrs. Walsh recommended the article's withdrawal and charged its insertion as politically motivated.

Committeeman Frank England also spoke against the article, maintaining that with six members, there is more citizens participation and that votes require a two-thirds majority.

He added that he checked with long-time Supt. Ripley who also recommended leaving the number of members at six.

In another article dealing with the change in structure of a town board, voters established a three-member Board of Sewer Commissioners, creating a separate body from the present Board of Water and Sewer Commissioners.

Proponent Manuel Salvador felt separate commissions would be able to operate more efficiently as the combined board had much to do. Commissioner William Montgouri said it would increase costs and the number of public offices to fill.

3-A Water Main Article Rejected By Voters

A town meeting article requesting \$65,000 to be advanced to the Water Department for a water main on Chief Justice Cushing Highway met with its demise Monday night on a 305 to 138 vote. The article needed a two-thirds majority vote to pass.

Both the Advisory Committee and the Capital Budget Committee noted the Water Department's deficit of \$125,000 so far this year; they were wary of incurring additional debts to the department. Richard Avery, Chairman of the Capital Budget Committee, said that the installation site was remote from other use areas and suggested deep wells as a solution.

John Elliott, a proponent of the article, said that potential user Cohasset Winter Gardens did have an old well which produced only unusable brackish water. The Winter Garden uses 30,000 gallons of water a day, Elliott said, which has to be brought there via a garden hose running over King Street. He also noted the possibility of a fire hazard.

"Winter Gardens is one of the largest taxpayers and local employers Cohasset has," Elliott said. "The Route 3A area is the only area that can be expanded and it needs water there to attract business."

Selectman Arthur Clark

Monday Town Meeting

urged a yes vote. "The Water Department is in trouble, it can't meet its commitments. They have to be able to sell lots of water." Clark compared the Water Department to a family with a dependent child, and suggested that the way to get the department back on its feet was to give it an opportunity to make more money, just as the family

should train the child to support himself.

Water Commissioner William Montgouri said that the Water Department has a distribution study underway which will be done on a priority basis and noted that the area in question heads the list. For this reason, however, chairman of the Planning Board Glenn Pratt, spoke against the article because he felt it was being considered in a piecemeal fashion and should wait until results of the distribution study.

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